

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
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O 061913Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4139  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ ADDRESSES PARLIAMENT

1. SUMMARY: IN A MAJOR LOCAL POLITICAL EVENT PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ ONUSEIES WHICH, THOUGH SHORT ON SUBSTANCE (ONE COMMENTATOR CALLED IT A DISCOURSE ON METHOD) CONVEYED A CENTRAL MESSAGE LOUD AND CLEAR - PARTISAN POLITICS AND JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE CAN ONLY COME AFTERWARD. HE ALSO STOUTLY DEFENDED HIS GOVT'S RECORD, PARTICULARLY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD. WITH THE MONCLOA PACTS AND TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH PUBLIC ORDER PROBLEMS, ALTHOUGH HE SAW NO END IN SIGHT TO TERRORISM. THE SPEECH WAS A RELATIVELY GOOD ONE IN TERMS OF STYLE AND SUBSTANCE. PYVRDS# BELIEVED NECESSARY PARTICULARLY SINCE SUAREZ MAKES PUBLIC ADDRESSES SO INFREQUENTLY. POLITICAL PARTY AND MEDIA RESPONSE PREDICTABLY HAS BEEN MIXED. THE DEBATE CONTINUES IN PARLIAMENT TODAY, WITH THE PSOE, PCE, AP AND CATALAN MINORITY DUE TO SPEAK. THE DEBATE MAY BE FOLLOWED BY

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THE PRESENTATION OF COMPETING RESOLUTIONS EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN AND CRITICISM OF THE GOVT. END SUMMARY

2. IN RESPONSE TO A MARCH 1 CONGRESS OF DEPUTIES RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE PRIME MINISTER TO EXPLAIN THE FEBRUARY 24 CABINET SHUFFLE AND HIS PROGRAM OF GOVERNANCE (MADRID 2436), SUAREZ ADDRESSED A PACKED

LOWER HOUSE APRIL 5. THE HIGH POINTS OF HIS SPEECH, WHICH RAN OVER 70 MINUTES, ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW:

3. PRIMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION. THE CENTRAL THEME OF SUAREZ' PRESENTATION WAS THAT "POLITICS OF STATE" WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE TO TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER "POLIT OF PARTY" UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION WAS APPROVED. STRESS THAT "NORMAL ADVERSARY POLITICS" COULD NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE APPROVED CONSTITUTION HAD BOTH COMPLETED THE DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION PROCESS AND ESTABLISHED THE FOUNDATION AND FRAMEWORK FOR PARTISAN POLITICS, SUAREZ UNDERLINED THE CONTINUING NEED FOR "CONSENSUS" AND "CONVERGENCE." HE WAS DETERMINED, HE SAID, TO ENSURE THAT THE CONSENSUS ON WHICH THE CONSTITUTION MUST BE BASED WOULD NOT BE THREATENED BY ATTEMPTS TO SECURE PARTISAN POLITICAL ADVANTAGE; THESE CONSIDERATIONS WOULD DICTATE HIS AND UCD'S BEHAVIOR, AND HE CALLED ON THE OPPOSITION, BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT, TO FOLLOW SUIT. ONCE THE CONSTITUTION WAS APPROVED, SPAIN WOULD MOVE FROM THE "SINGULAR" POLITICS WHICH HAD TO CHARACTERIZE THE "LEGAL" TRANSFORMATION OF THE OLD REGIME TO THE POLITICS OF COMPETITION WHICH ARE A HALLMARK OF WESTERN DEMOCRACIES. IN THIS REGARD, HE REITERATED THE GOVT'S COMMITMENT TO CONVOKE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION IN REFERENDUM.

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4. THE FEB. 24 CABINET SHUFFLE. SUAREZ STATED THAT THE GOVT CHANGES CAME ABOUT SIMPLY BECAUSE THEN-ECONOMIC SUPERMINISTER FUENTES QUINTANA HAD INSISTED ON RESIGNING. HE HAD FULFILLED HIS FUNCTION OF DESIGNING AN ECONOMIC PROGRAM, SUAREZ CONTINUED, AND THE MINISTERIAL ADJUSTMENTS THAT WERE CARRIED OUT REPRESENTED AN ATTEMPT TO ENABLE THE GOVT TO IMPLEMENT THAT PROGRAM MORE EFFECTIVE. THERE HAD BEEN "NO GOVT CRISIS," NOR HAD THERE BEEN ANY CHANGE IN PROGRAM, SUAREZ INSISTED, AS WAS DEMONSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT FUENTES QUINTANA REMAINED AS AN ADVISOR TO THE PRIME MINISTER. THE GOVT FULLY INTENDED TO CARRY OUT THE PROGRAM ELABORATED BY FUENTES, SUAREZ CONTINUED, AS ITS ACTIONS SINCE THE CABINET SHUFFLE HAD CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED. THE GOVT ALSO WOULD CONTINUE TO FULFILL ALL COMMITMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE MONCLOA PACTS, SOMETHING WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HOPED AND EXPECTED THE OPPOSITION TO DO AS WELL.

5. OTHER PRIORITIES. IN ADDITION TO THE CONSTITUTION, SUAREZ STATED, THE GOVT CONTINUED TO CONSIDER SPAIN'S

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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

PRIORITIES TO BE SOCIAL/ECONOMIC POLICY, FOREIGN POLICY  
(BOTH OF WHICH WILL BE COVERED SEPTEL), AND CITIZENS'  
SECURITY. ON THE LATTER SCORE SUAREZ ACKNOWLEDGED THAT  
BOTH THE INCREASING INCIDENCE OF COMMON CRIME, LARGELY  
ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND  
PERSISTENT POLITICAL TERRORISM WERE WORRISOME. HE  
EMPHASIZED THE GOVT'S DEDICATION TO ADDRESSING THE  
CAUSES OF COMMON CRIME AS WELL AS THE MODERNIZATION OF  
THE LEGAL CODE AND ITS COMMITMENT TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY  
WITH TERRORISM. HE ALSO CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT NO  
SOLUTION TO TERRORISM WAS IN SIGHT.

6. RETURNING TO HIS CENTRAL THEME OF THE NECESSITY  
TO FINALIZE THE CONSTITUTION, SUAREZ ALSO POINTED OUT  
THAT ATTEMPTS TO BRING THE COUNTRY'S LAWS INTO LINE  
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WITH ITS NEW POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REALITY, NOT TO  
MENTION THE AGREEMENTS REACHED UNDER THE MONCLOA PACTS,  
WERE BY THEIR VERY NATURE "PRECARIOUS AND PROVISIONAL"  
UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION WAS APPROVED. IN THIS CONNECTION  
HE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE AUTONOMY QUESTION, WHERE  
HE DEFENDED THE GOVT'S "PRE-AUTONOMY" INITIATIVES AS  
"PREPARING THE REGIONS TO ASSUME THE FULL RESPONSIBILITIES  
OF AUTONOMY," ALTHOUGH THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES WOULD ONLY  
BE CATALOGUED DEFINITIVELY BY THE CONSTITUTION ITSELF.  
(COMMENT: THIS CLEARLY WAS INTENDED AS A REASSURANCE TO  
THE REGIONS THAT THE GOVT CONTINUED TO BE COMMITTED TO  
DEVOLUTION, AND AS A RESPONSE TO CRITICISMS THAT THE  
"PRE-AUTONOMIES" WERE DEVOID OF CONTENT AND MEANING.)  
7. PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE. ALTHOUGH AGAIN STEERING CLEAR  
OF DETAILS, SUAREZ MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT OF HIS  
"PROGRAM OF THE FUTURE": TO RETURN POLITICAL PROTAGONISM  
TO THE SPANISH PEOPLE AND CONSOLIDATE A DEMOCRATIC STATE  
OF LAW IN THE BRIEDEST POSSIBLE TIME; TO ESTABLISH THE  
FOUNDATION FOR A "FULL SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY," AND FOR  
"SPAIN TO INSERT ITSELF...IN A MODEL OF LIFE, AND OF  
POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION SIMILAR TO  
THAT OF THE OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN WORLD."  
TOWARD THIS END, SUAREZ CALLED ON "ALL SOCIAL FORCES,  
EMBASSY ORGANIZATIONS, LABOR UNIONS AND OTHER ENTITIES  
TO COME TOGETHER IN REACHING, IN THE BRIEDEST POSSIBLE  
TIME, INSTITUTIONAL MATURITY IN FULL DEMOCRACY."

8. THE PRESENTATIONS OF SUAREZ AND VICE-PRESIDENT ABRIL  
ON THE ECONOMY WERE THEN FOLLOWED BY RESPONSES FROM  
SPOKESMEN FOR THE BASQUE MINORITY AND MIXED GROUP BEFORE  
THE SESSION WAS ADJOURNED SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT TO BE  
COMPLETED TODAY.

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--JAVIER ARZALLUZ (PNV) TYPICALLY DEVOTED MOST OF HIS  
SPEECH TO THE SUBJECT OF AUTONOMY, LAMENTING THE GOVT'S  
FAILURE TO HOLD MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND THE BASQUE GENERAL  
COUNCIL'S LACK OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES. HE CHARACTERIZED  
THE GOVT'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONCLOA CTS AS  
SATISFACTORY.

--ENRIQUE TIERNO GALVAN (PSP-MIXED GROUP) CRITICIZED  
THE GOVT FOR "NOT HAVING THE PROGRAM WE WOULD HAVE WANTED,"  
AND IMPLIED THAT SUAREZ WAS NOT LIVING UP FULLY TO THE  
MONCLOA CTS. HE ALSO CHARGED THAT THE PUBLIC ORDER  
SITUATION WAS EVEN WORSE THAN SUAREZ HAD INDICATED, AND  
RETRAYED THE GOVT AS "SUFFERING A CRISIS OF AUTHORITY."

--HEADING UP THE LIST OF LIKELY SPEAKERS IN TODAY'S  
CONTINUATION ARE FELIPE GONZALEZ (PSOE), SANTIAGO  
CARRILLO (PCE), AND MANUEL FRAGA (AP).

9. REACTION TO SUAREZ' SPEECH HAS DIVIDED PREDICTABLY  
ALONG PARTY LINES, WITH UCD LEADERS ROUNDLY PRAISING  
THE PRESENTATION AND JUST ABOUT EVERYONE ELSE, PARTICULAR  
ARLY THE PSOE AND AP, CRITICIZING IT.

--FELIPE GONZALEZ REFUSED TO COMMENT, CLEARLY SAVING  
HIS BARBS FOR TODAY'S SPEECH, BUT OTHER PSOE LEADERS  
STATED ACIDLY THAT THEY WERE NOW ACCUSTOMED TO SPEECHES  
BY SUAREZ IN WHICH HE TALKED OF GOOD INTENTIONS WITHOUT  
REALLY SAYING ANYTHING.

--FOR FRAGA, "THERE HAS BEEN NO SPEECH...WE EXPECTED  
AN ACTION PROGRAM AND HAVE SIMPLY BEEN TOLD THAT THE  
GOVT STILL CANNOT GOVERN."

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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

--THE COMMUNISTS, FOR THEIR RT, WERE MUCH MORE  
CIRCUMSPECT. ALTHOUGH CARRILLO REFUSED TO COMMENT, PARTY  
NOTABLES SANCHEZ MONTERO AND LOPEZ RAIMUNDO, WHILE

POINTING OUT THAT THE SPEECH OFFERED NOTHING NEW, EXPRESSED THEIR SATISFACTION THAT SUAREZ HAD PLACED SO MUCH EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR CONSENSUS.

10. THE MEDIA TOO HAS TAKEN RATHER PREDICTABLE POSITIONS ON THE SPEECH, WITH LEFT-LEANING "EL PAIS" STRONGLY CRITICIZING IT AND "ABC", "YA", AND "ARRIBA" PRAISING IT TO VARIOUS DEGREES.

--FOR "EL PAIS," SUAREZ' ESTATION WAS SO DISAPPOINTING AND DEVOID OF SUBSTANCE THAT IT DID NOT MERIT SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT.

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--"ABC" IN CONTRAST COMPLIMENTED THE IME MINISTER FOR HIS SINCERITY, BELIEVING SUAREZ "HAD TRACED A CLEAR PATH OF CONTINUITY IN HIS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, DEMONSTRATING HIS CONVICTION THAT NATIONAL INTEREST SO DICTATED."

--IN "YA'S" VIEW, ALTHOUGH THE SPEECH LACKED SUAREZ' SPARK, HE HAD CALLED SINCERELY FOR NATIONAL CONSENSUS AND RESPONSIBILITY.

--FOR "ARRIBA," SUAREZ HAD NOT PLACED SUFFICIENT EMPHASIS ON PUBLIC ORDER PROBLEMS, THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC DISTRESS, OR THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION, BUT IT HAD BEEN A HOPEFUL SPEECH IN WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HAD CAREFULLY LIMITED HIMSELF TO GENERALITIES BECAUSE OF THE IMPEDING CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE.

11. COMMENT: IN THE WEEKS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE MARCH 1 RESOLUTION WAS PASSED, THERE WAS WIDESPREAD SPECULATION THAT THE APRIL 5 PLENARY WOULD BE THE SCENE OF A REAL SHOWDOWN, WITH ONE OR MORE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS PERHAPS EVEN MOVING A VOTE OF CENSURE OF THE GOVT. BUT AS THE PLENARY APPROACHED, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOVT FIRST REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE CATALAN MINORITY THAT, IN EXCHANGE FOR RETAINING THE TERM "NATIONALITIES" IN THE CONSTITUTION, THE CATALANS WOULD SUPPORT THE GOVT CONSISTENTLY IN PARLIAMENTARY VOTES. THE COMMUNISTS THEN MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY HAD NO INTENTION OF JOINING ANY INITIATIVE THAT MIGHT "UNDERMINE" THE GOVT., AND IT EVEN BECAME QUESTIONABLE THAT FRAGA'S AP, WHICH IS ATTEMPTING TO IMPRESS ON SUAREZ UCD'S NEED FOR AP SUPPORT WOULD PUSH TOO HARD. FINALLY, THE PSOE, PERHAPS BECAUSE

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IT REALIZED IT WAS POTETIALLY ISOLATED ON THE QUESTION, STATED LAST WEEKED THAT IT DID NOT INTEED TO SEEK A CENSURE VOTE.

12. NEVERTHELESS, WE EXPECT, AT A MINIMUM, TOUGH RHETORICAL POSTURING IN TODAY'S WINDUP, MOST LIKELY FROM AP AND THE PSOE. VARIOUS COMPETING RESOLUTIONS MAY BE PESENTED, RANGING FROM ONE EXRESSING CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVT (UCD) TO THOSE RECORDING CRITICISM (PERHAPS AP OR THE PSOE). WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT THE PSOE IS LOBBYING IN THE CORRIDORS FOR AN AGREEMENT TO TERMINATE THE DEBATEE--AND THE SESSION--WITHOUT THE PRESENTATION OF ANY RESOLUTIONS, EITHER FOR OR AGAINST UCD.

13. PARTISAN ATTACKS ON SUAREZ' SPEECH NOTWITHSTANDING, IT WAS A RELATIVELY GOOD PRESENTATION, BOTH IN STYLE AND SUBSTANCE. IT DEMONSTRATED BOTH THAT SUAREZ' HEALTH IS GOOD (THERE HAD BEEN SPECULATION OF ILLNESS) AND THAT HE IS PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF HANDLING HIMSELF ABLY IN A PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT. BUT AS RESPECTED YOUNG JOURNALIST PEDRO RAMIREZ ("ABC," "OPINION") TOLD EMBOFF TODAY, WHAT THE SPEECH LACKED, PARTICULARLY IN THE SEGMENT CONCERNING THE PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE, WAS MORE OF AN INSPIRATIONAL ELEMNT WHICH COULD HELP THE MAN IN THE STREET OVERCOME SOME OF HIS PESSIMISM ABOUT THE GENERAL COURSE OF EVENTS. RAMIREZ SAID HE HAD BEEN WITH FINANCE MINISTER FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ THIS MORNING, AND FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ HAD VOICED PRECISELY THAT CONCERN. AT ALL EVENTS THE MESSAGE CONVEYED BY SUAREZ WAS PERFECTLY CLEAR: LET'S GET ON WITH THE CONSTITUTION, BECAUSE EVERYTHING ELSE DEPENDS ON IT, AND WILL HAVE TO COME AFTERWARD.

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## Message Attributes

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